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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, by whose providence our forebears brought forth this Nation, use our lawmakers to make a better world. Empower them to remove those things that obstruct the coming of Your Kingdom on Earth. As they strive for human betterment, may they experience the constancy of Your presence.

Lord, give them the wisdom to give primacy to prayer, seeking Your guidance in all they think, say, and do. Teach them the lessons they ought to learn, enabling them to grow in grace and in a knowledge of You.

And, Lord, with the approach of September 11, we pause to thank You for Your sustaining and prevailing providence. Remind us to not put our trust in human might, but in Your grace, mercy, and power.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now observe a moment of silence in remembrance of the lives lost in the attacks of September 11, 2001.

(Moment of silence.)

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 3296 AND S. 3297

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3296) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exemption to the individual mandate to maintain health coverage for individuals residing in counties with fewer than 2 health insurance issuers offering plans on an Exchange.

A bill (S. 3297) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exemption to the individual mandate to maintain health coverage for certain individuals whose premium has increased by more than 10 percent, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bills on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, 15 years ago this Sunday, Al Qaeda terrorists launched brutal and vicious attacks against our country. Yet this weekend America will remember not only the horror of those attacks but also the heroism of our response.

We saw firefighters, police officers, and first responders rush in to confront danger. We saw the men and women of our Armed Forces stand ready and sacrifice greatly in defense of our country. We saw Americans across the land work together in a spirit of unity. So

15 years later, it is clear that the terrorists did not succeed. We remain united against terror.

So this Sunday is a day to remember and honor the victims of September 11 and pray for their families. It is also a day to express gratitude to the many Americans who have fought to keep us safe ever since—the men and women who fight for the very thing that makes this the greatest Nation on Earth—freedom.

CONGRATULATING BRIAN DUFFY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I want to take a few moments to congratulate a fellow Kentuckian and a good friend of mine who has recently taken up the leadership reins of America's oldest and largest war veterans organization.

This summer, Brian Duffy, of Louisville, was elected commander in chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Brian is the first Operation Desert Storm veteran to lead the VFW. His election is good news, not only for his fellow Desert Storm veterans but for veterans of every generation. That is because Brian lives to serve his fellow veterans, and he has been doing so for decades as a proud member of the VFW for 33 years.

Let me give one example of what Brian has done for the veterans of Kentucky. He is the founder of the Bluegrass chapter of an organization called Honor Flight, a group that flies World War II and Korean war veterans to Washington to visit the memorials that were built in dedication of their military service.

The program provides transportation and food for the veterans of this by-gone era, those whose numbers, unfortunately, continue to shrink year after year. Without Honor Flight, many of these veterans would never be able to see the World War II Memorial or the Korean War Veterans Memorial. It is important that they know, more than

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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